

PUBLIC SCOPING PERIOD FOR THE FAST FLUX TEST FACILITY DECOMMISSIONING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



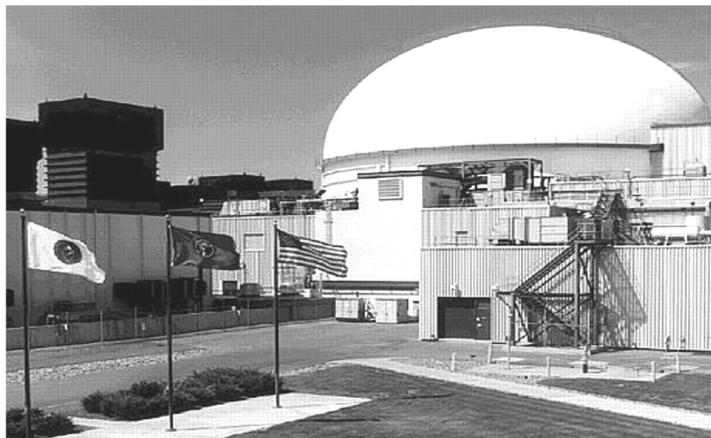
BACKGROUND

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is preparing a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposed decommissioning of the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF) and certain support facilities at the Hanford Site, Richland, Washington.

The FFTF was a 400 megawatt (thermal) liquid-metal (sodium) cooled nuclear test reactor. Built in the 1970s, it was used between 1982 and 1992 to develop and test advanced nuclear fuels, materials, equipment and reactor safety designs for the Liquid Metal Fast Breeder Reactor Program. The FFTF also was used in ancillary experimental activities to produce a variety of medical and industrial isotopes. The facility was shut down and is in the process of being deactivated. Deactivation activities under way at this time include: draining sodium systems, washing the fuel to remove sodium and placing the fuel into dry cask storage, and deactivating auxiliary plant systems. The EIS will document previous DOE NEPA decisions regarding management and disposition of FFTF fuel, which includes the sodium-bonded fuel. However, decisions regarding the disposition of FFTF fuel are not within the scope of this decommissioning EIS.

DOE's purpose and need is to reduce long-term risks associated with the deactivated FFTF and its ancillary support facilities, and to reduce surveillance and maintenance costs. Therefore, DOE proposes to decommission the deactivated FFTF and its support facilities.

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PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

DOE has made a programmatic decision to permanently shutdown and deactivate FFTF. DOE is currently performing deactivation activities consistent with this decision; therefore, restart of the FFTF will not be considered a reasonable decommissioning alternative. Other decommissioning alternatives that arise during public scoping and preparation of the draft EIS will be considered.

The DOE proposed alternatives to be considered in this EIS presently include:

No Action: Complete the permanent deactivation of the FFTF consistent with previous DOE NEPA decisions, such that the FFTF and its support facilities could be maintained in a safe long-term surveillance and maintenance condition for the foreseeable future; final decommissioning would not occur.

Public Comment

Submit comments by
October 8, 2004 to:

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Entombment: Decontaminate, dismantle, and remove the above-grade Reactor Containment Building (RCB) dome and structures within. The below-grade structures (e.g., the FFTF Reactor Vessel filled with radioactive and contaminated equipment, piping, etc.) would be grouted and left in place. Equipment and special components (e.g., sodium-filled filters) would be removed, treated onsite or at Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL), and disposed at Hanford or an offsite facility. Associated buildings would be demolished and the rubble disposed at Hanford.

Removal: Decontaminate, dismantle, and remove the above-grade RCB dome. The below-grade structures (e.g., FFTF Reactor Vessel, radioactive equipment, piping, etc.) also would be removed. The removed reactor vessel and piping would be disposed at Hanford. Equipment and special components (e.g., sodium-filled filters) would be removed, treated onsite or at INEEL, and disposed at Hanford or an offsite facility. Associated buildings would be demolished and the rubble disposed at Hanford.

The EIS will analyze reasonable alternatives for the FFTF waste, and reasonable onsite (Hanford) and offsite (INEEL) alternatives for the management and disposition of the Hanford Site radioactive sodium inventory, which includes the FFTF sodium.

**USDOE will take comments on the proposed scope of this EIS through
October 8, 2004.**

Two scoping meetings are planned:

September 22, 2004
RICHLAND, WASHINGTON
Red Lion Inn - Hanford House
802 George Washington Way

September 30, 2004
IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO
Shilo Inn
780 Lindsay Boulevard

Meeting Time: 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

To obtain a copy of the Notice of Intent (NOI) or if you have questions about the proposed action, please contact the FFTF EIS Information Phone Line: 1-888-886-0821.

The NOI can be found online at
<http://www.hanford.gov/calendar>
under the Public Comment Period Section

FFTF Decommissioning EIS

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